

## **Step Into Life.**

### **A self-guided walking program to address cancer-related fatigue**

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**Purpose:** The goal of this project is to establish a simple 6-week stepping program to create a model of care that is compliant with nationally recognized guidelines and that addresses a broader concept of health.

**Background & Significance:** The prevalence of cancer-related fatigue in studies range from 17% to 100% with consistent rates above 60% in research studies published over the past five years. Almost half of all patients who reported fatigue stated that they were not offered any recommendations to address their fatigue and 79% did not discuss fatigue with their clinicians because their assumption was that fatigue was an expected symptom from their cancer treatment. Forty-five percent of patients believed that nothing could be done to relieve or to reduce fatigue. Interventions with self-care activity, like exercise, can help address the need of maintaining functional independence and quality of life within our target population at a very low cost. Fatigue is emerging as a persistent side effect of treatment for cancer, especially among patients who have undergone a bone marrow transplant (BMT). Patients undergoing stem cell transplant are at especially high risk for developing both acute (during treatment) and chronic (post treatment) fatigue as well as functional deficits.

**Methods:** We will enroll 30 patients who are undergoing stem cell transplant as outpatients. We anticipate that this population that will receive the highest benefit from a structured step program. Our target group currently does not have any structured intervention to address their cancer-related fatigue, versus inpatients BMT recipients who might become more deconditioned by prolonged inactivity but do receive physical therapy in a regular bases in the hospital setting.

**Conclusion & Implications:** The goal of Step Into Life is to study the effect of a structured program to maintain functional independence and social roles that impact quality of life. We hope participants will return more promptly to before-treatment conditioning status. The program will foster a safe, effective, and virtually cost-free treatment to the overwhelming problem of fatigue.